



## **Alaska Federal Health Care Partnership (AFHCP)**

### **Background**

Alaska has a population of 615,000 people, 40% of which are federally funded health care beneficiaries. Approximately 25% live in towns or villages that can only be reached by small planes or boats. These areas have minimal health and medical care available, often with the only trained medical staff is a village health aide.

In 1995, the Alaska Federal Health Care Partnership (AFHCP) was formed to increase the sharing of resources and to maximize the provision of health care services to all federal beneficiaries. It consists of DOD facilities, Coast Guard, Veterans Affairs and the Indian Health Service through the Alaska Native Medical Center. Through the use of a telecommunications infrastructure and digital imaging technology, timely primary and specialty care can be extended from the larger tertiary facilities to the smallest rural clinic.

Project Akamai has partnered with the AFHCP to participate in the establishment of such a Telemedicine network and to research and evaluate the efficacy of teleradiology and telemedicine in remote, underserved areas. The initial working meeting between Akamai and the AFHCP Executive Committee was held in October 1998. A follow-on meeting is being arranged between the Executive Committee and the senior leadership of Akamai to discuss continued cooperation in the development and extension of Telemedicine.

### **Organization**

MS Susan Yeager, AFHCP

MS Gwen Obermiller, AFHCP

MR Denver Lodge, Alaska Native Medical Center

MR Herbert Sivitz, Alaska Native Medical Center

**Mission Statement** – Establish a teleradiology / telemedicine network among the federal facilities in Alaska.

### **Goals and Objectives**

Objectives – Install Telemedicine and Teleradiology capabilities in Alaska to connect the facilities of the Alaska Federal Health Care Partnership.

Goals: Establish large hubs in large medical facilities in Fairbanks and Anchorage.  
Establish teleradiology / telemedicine capabilities in ten area hospitals.  
Extend teleradiology support to the seventeen (17) clinics dispersed throughout the region.

## **Current Status**

### **a) Primary Accomplishments -**

1. Major Picture Archiving and Communications systems (PACS) have been established at Elmendorf, Bassett Army Community Hospital, Veterans Hospital and the Alaska Native Medical Center.
2. Teleradiology systems have been installed at Dillingham, Barrow, Bethel, Juneau and Sitka, Fairbanks, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Kotzebue, Nome.
3. Teleradiology systems have been installed at the Kodiak and Ketchikan Coast Guard Clinics. The clinics are supported by the 51<sup>st</sup> Medical Group, Elmendorf AFB. Clinical operation began in June 1999.

### **b) Project Timelines-**

1. Complete the installation of PACS at Bassett Army Community Hospital by fall 1998.
2. Complete the transition of PACS from the old Elmendorf Hospital to the New Hospital by January 1999.
3. Install teleradiology capabilities at the following hospitals during FY98-FY99: Dillingham, Barrow, Bethel, Juneau and Sitka, Fairbanks, Ketchikan, Kodiak, Kotzebue, Nome.
4. Phase III of the VRE will install teleradiology spokes at the following clinics during FY99-FY2000:
  - Akutan   - Aniak- Chignik       - Cold Bay   - Fort Yukon
  - Galena   - Hoonah       - Ketchikan   - King Cove   - Klawock
  - McGrath   - Metlakatla   - Saint George - Saint Paul   - Sand Point
  - Tanana   - Unalaklete

## **Strategic Direction**

The primary focus of this installation is to continue the establishment of a large, filmless, "virtual radiology" department in the Alaska region consisting of the members of the AFHCP.

After the system becomes operational, a study will be conducted to explore the networking of federal facilities in the Alaska Federal Health Care Partnership. Further networking can be accomplished by connecting with facilities in the lower 48 states, namely Madigan AMC and Tripler AMC. Central archiving or data warehousing is also an issue that needs to be studied because it is a central part of the eventual "virtual radiology" department.

As technology continues to improve, it facilitates the extension of medical support through telemedicine to remote areas previously unsupported. Alaska, in its vastness supports research in case management and establishing consulting and referral patterns among the many facilities distributed throughout.

### **Business Associations**

#### *Corporate Partnerships:*

GE Medical Systems Integrated Imaging Solutions Group  
Dejarnette  
Fuji Medical Systems U.S.A., INC.  
Imation (3M)  
MIS-LABS  
MedWeb  
ACCESS INC.,

#### *Government Partnerships:*

Alaska Native Medical Center  
Veteran Hospital, Anchorage, Alaska  
Elmendorf AFB Hospital, Elmendorf Alaska  
Bassett ACH, Fairbanks, Alaska  
Information Technology Program Office (ITPO), FT Detrick, MD  
AKAMAI Project Office, Hawaii  
PACAF Surgeon, Hawaii

### **Project Security:**

System Security- The system is doubly protected through usernames and passwords. The systems administrator maintains list of authorized users.

Standards compliance measures : Standards published or enforced by the Security Manager, Information Management Office are complied with.

### **Summary**

In 1995, the Alaska Federal Health Care Partnership (AFHCP) was formed to increase the sharing of resources and to maximize the provision of health care services to all federal beneficiaries. It consists of DOD facilities, Coast Guard, Veterans Affairs and the Indian Health Service through the Alaska Native Medical Center. Project Akamai has partnered with the AFHCP to participate in the establishment of such a Telemedicine network and to research and evaluate the efficacy of teleradiology and telemedicine in remote, underserved areas. PACS systems have been established in large federal hospital in Anchorage and Fairbanks. Other implementations are scheduled between FY98 and FY2000 to complete the establishment of this “virtual radiology” environment in Alaska.

